



The I/O Connector

December
1988

The Newsletter of the San Diego Atari Computer Enthusiasts

Remember to vote at the S.D.A.C.E. Elections, Thursday, December 1st at the North Park Rec Center, 2719 Howard Street, across from Folsom's Racquet Ball Courts.



"What is Santa Claus really like?"

RAM Disk Shopping Guide

Using the ST in Law Enforcement

Final Warning! WordPerfect for \$155.00 till December 31st

Subscribe to Current Notes: Order Form Enclosed

New Owners need *Help!* See inside ad!

THE SAN DIEGO ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

(S.D.A.C.E.) is an independent, non-profit organization and users group with no connection to Atari Corporation. Membership includes access to the program libraries, subscription to **The I/O Connector**, free want ads, and access to other club activities. Permission to reprint articles from this newsletter in non-commercial form is granted provided original credit is given

Commercial Advertising-Monthly Rates

\$35-Full \$30-Back \$20-Half \$10-Quarter \$5-Business Card
(Prepay for 5 months, get the 6th Free!)

S.D.A.C.E. Officers

| | | | |
|------------|--|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| President | Mark Lawless 691-7844 (10 a.m.-5 p.m.) | V.P. (8-bit) | Ron Miller 748-7195 (5 p.m.-9 p.m.) |
| Treasurer | Nancy Rivers 670-6991 (leave message) | Membership | Dick Hiatt 541-7034 (5 p.m.-9 p.m.) |
| Secretary | David Delgadillo 475-6790 (5p.m.-9 p.m.) | 8-Bit Librarian | Dan Huffman |
| Newsletter | Tom Briant 581-2477 (5 p.m.-9 p.m.) | ST Librarian | Paul Huntington |

SDACE B.B.S. (619) 284-3821 300/1200/2400 Baud
XE/ST Sysop: Rick DeHaven 24 hours/60+ megabytes

Mailing Address:

S.D.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 203076
San Diego, CA 92120.

Newsletter Submissions:

Send all text and graphics to the club P.O. Box or Sig 1 of the S.D.A.C.E. BBS by the 30th of each month for inclusion the next month. Text should be ASCII or Word Writer; Graphics should be high-res DEGAS or .IMG.

Yes, sign me up for one year's membership in S.D.A.C.E. This entitles me to receive the monthly club newsletter, use the club libraries, and full use of the club B.B.S. Membership fees are \$18 per year. Mail this form and your check to :

S.D.A.C.E., P.O. BOX 203076, San Diego, CA 92120

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Computer _____

Comments _____

The Pursuit of Happiness by Tom Briant

This is my final issue as editor and publisher of The I/O Connector, so I hope it's a good one. If you wonder how I came up with November's cover, that's what you get when faced with a next day deadline at 11:30 p.m., and you can't find a turkey picture anywhere on a 60 megabyte hard disk. As for this month's cover, I've been waiting all year to use it. No crummy PrintMaster icons for this newsletter, no sir!

Remember, December 1st, this upcoming Thursday, is ANNUAL ELECTIONS. Show up and participate, you can't vote by modem or mail.

Ron Miller will take over as Newsletter Editor next month. Support him! No matter the election returns, I still intend to contribute to the newsletter, as should you. I cranked out the RAM disk shopping guide because no one else had! John Kelleher wrote his article on using his 8-bit to pick which colors to paint his house in because no one else had! John, you're famous, too. Several newsletters picked up that article, including the Suburban Chicago Atari Team newsletter. Ron Miller got his Maps and Legends review picked up by the Ports Atari Computer Enthusiasts in Duluth, Minnesota.

What's the status of S.D.A.C.E. today? Well, we number about 100 members. One store, Computer Outlet, advertises in The I/O Connector. The treasury has enough money to finance the newsletter. The 8-bit SIG voted to merge its meetings with the larger group, as most of their member also own an ST.

We could coast along with this situation, but consider this: 10 stores in San Diego County sell ST hardware and software. 6 sell 8-bit hardware and software. Many states have one single Atari dealer. A lot of new owners need help getting their hardware and software up and running. (See ad) Many people don't own modems and want a local source of public domain programs. A constant stream of publicity could solve our problems and theirs. New

members could get answers to their problems, while the newsletter could expand, attract new advertisers, and go out at a lower rate than First Class. Got any ideas? Want to help? Come to the December 1st meeting.

Do not, however, confuse publicity for S.D.A.C.E. with publicity for Atari Computer, Inc. This is a Fortune 500 Corporation with enough sense to do its own marketing. They apparently do not want to slug it out with Commodore and IBM and Apple in broad mass markets. They choose to pick their spots, such as MIDI applications and local law enforcement. I'd never have guessed the same computer would appeal to both rock musicians and cops.

Speaking of rock and roll, an legitimate Atari clone is on the market. No fooling, a German company, IBP, licensed the Atari architecture. They designed and built a Mocktari Mega ST the size of two thick paperbacks with full interface ports and a Eurobuss expansion bus. I mentioned "rock and roll," because acement company used one of the first units to control a cement mixing plant! They showed the unit at COMDEX, looking for a U.S. distributor.

The most interesting story from COMDEX I've heard concerns optical character recognition software for the ST. That's right, a French company developed software that uses a scanner, from a \$99.00 Seymour-Radix printer clipon to a \$1,500 Canon flat bed, to read printed material and turn it into a text file. It's available in France, in England, everywhere but here. Aargh!

Next to last paragraph. Okay, so I didn't find out anything more about TurboWriter, the new 80 character per line word processor for the 8-bit. Shame on me. In recompense, I did discover a domestic source for Signum, the European scientific word processor. STPlus up in Bezerkeley sells it for \$249.95. Looking at their ad on page 90 of the December START. I see they also sell Tetris for \$29.95, too.

Final paragraph. I want to thank everyone who helped me this year. First, Rick DeHaven. Without his expertise at the laser printer, most of these issues would look awful. I did this one on my 9-pin at home to save time. Second, Ron Miller and John Kelleher, the contributors to the 8-bit side. Third, Mike Bergman and Mike Street, who contributed ST articles and put a lot of effort into the club this year. Finally, I want to thank in advance everyone who shows up December 1st for elections.

On December 19, S.D.A.C.E. will hold a Christmas party at the North Park Rec Center Social Room at 6:30 p.m. We'll eat cookies and punch, and play some games.

Atari BBS List

SDACE-BBS XE/ST
284-3821

COMPUTER PLUS XE/ST
691-7862

COMPUTER OUTLET ST
282-6815

COMPUTER BLVD ST
670-1095 (NEW!)

SMART 520 ST
480-9686 / 726-4419

THE LORD'S HOUSE XE
579-7354

SHERWOOD FOREST XE
273-5603

COMPUTOREDGE ST
573-1675

Updates and additions welcome!

RAM Disk Guide

You may already know about RAM disks, those handy utilities that turn part of your memory into a hyperspeed disk drive. You may know how to install one. You don't know, though, which one to get. Should you buy a commercial product or a public domain/shareware product? Do you want one that uses GEM or will a stripped down TOS product do the job? Which disk is the right one for you?

First, ST RAM disks come in 3 types for the ST. 1. The desk accessory type that uses GEM. Handy if you need an extra disk drive in the middle of an application. 2. The stand-alone program that start from the desktop. You can't use these in the middle of an application like the D/A, but they use less memory for themselves. 3. The \AUTO\ folder programs that install upon bootup. If you always need an extra disk drive with a particular application, these programs take up the least space. If the program stays on your boot disk, it often survives a warmboot or crash with your data intact.

A word of caution. Since every programmer writes their RAM disk program to achieve different results, it may not work with your intended program. A classic case occurred when a paint program featured on a Compute ST disk failed to work when installed on an earlier RAM disk program. Try your intended application with the RAM disk before entrusting precious data or program code to it! If a program came with a RAM disk, such as SHADOW or TURTLE, use that RAM disk with that program.

Fortunately, if you don't achieve the desired results with the first RAM disk, you can easily acquire another one from the S.D.A.C.E. P/D library or

BBS, SIG 4 (Utilities).

Now I'll cut to the chase and describe several RAM disk programs that I use and my opinion of each.

1. Y.A.R.D. (Yet Another RAM Disk) At 640 bytes, you won't find a smaller program, or a better one. You install Y.A.R.D. by installing an \AUTO\ folder on your boot disk and making Y.A.R.D. the first program in the folder. You must do this, because Y.A.R.D. installs in two passes to achieve reboot resistance.

2. SI RAM This is the best desk accessory RAM I know of. Written as a promotional item for ST Informer magazine, it features the ability to autoloading up to 10 programs and to save a desired configuration of drive letter, size, and programs to load in a small file. You will find it in the library and BBS, but I recommend you buy it as part of Application and Design's Universal Item Selector. You need Universal Item Selector as much as you need a RAM disk.

3. MegaMatic This is a shareware program by Lloyd E. Pulley, Sr. It features a reset-resistant RAM disk, a print spooler, a screen saver, warm and cold reboot from the keyboard, memory check, and several other neat functions that escape me right now. Written in assembly language, this little program weighs in at only 4K bytes! But wait, there's more! It includes a configuration program allowing you to customize the program as you see fit. Oh, yes, it runs from the first position in the \AUTO\ folder.

4. HRAMDSK2 This is a new program originally written for Hybrid Arts. John Eidsvoog, the programmer, then rewrote it as a standalone program. Each time you run the program, you set the desired drive and size in 64K increments. This program only needs

one pass to install itself, but it resists rebooting as well as the two pass types, Y.A.R.D. and MegaMatic. Installs from the \AUTO\ folder.

5. MAXIDISK This is an interesting German RAM disk. It uses a compression algorithm to hold more data than you configured it for! I successfully put 660K of data into a 500K disk. Do not expect, though, that MAXIDISK will always do this trick, as the amount of compression depends on the nature of the data. Installs from the \AUTO\ folder.

6. L-DISK Keith Ledbetter wrote this specifically for programmers. It holds up to 256 files, and resists reboots and crashes. Comes as part of the L-Utilities packages, along with L-CACHE, a hard disk caching program, a program to measure the effectiveness of the disk caches, and a master configuration program. This is shareware, and installs from the \AUTO\ folder.

7. GOODIE This is a P/D desk accessory with several functions. When you click on it, it immediately asks for the time and date, then presents a visual menu. If you decide to install the RAM disk, you must choose from 64K increments, and each size requires you to install a specified letter.

8. RAMBABY Interlink wrote this as a promotional item for its Interlink and Revolver software, which explains its 34K size. Apart from the size, it works fine.

9. HARRIS I must mention this RAM disk, because one of S.D.A.C.E.'s founders, John Harris, wrote this. Merry Christmas, John, from all of us! This program only installs as drive D, but allows you to set the size upon boot-up. Installs from the \AUTO\ folder.

10. FASTRAM You can either run

(Continued Next Page)

Cops and Megs by Dave Flory

(Copyright 1988 Darlah J. Pine)

The ST has made it in several business worlds and is making it in mine. My world is one of the most popular ones on the tube, that of the police and law enforcement. I have been a hi-tech junky ever since I read some of Isaac Asimov's first books back sometime around the late 1940s. Then I actually got to touch an IBM 650 in the summer of 1959. After joining the San Jose Police Dept. in December of 1963 I was continually interested in trying to find a way to combine these interests. With the introduction of the ST I began to see ways this could be done. The power of the ST line, combined with the low price, made it perfect for the impoverished law enforcement budget. For a while I used mine in the traffic office, keeping track of work statistics needed for management reports and writing the memos/reports that seem to be the lifeblood of law enforcement. I finally managed to get a Mega 4, HD, and SLM804, and the fun really started. For several years, in the Traffic Unit, I used the Atari to keep track of the abovementioned stats on spreadsheets. Then the load of keeping track of traffic complaints became huge and the ST with Zoomracks were called into service. It performed very well, with macros automating the process so that non-"computer junkies" could do the job well. One of our major areas of work, which consumed many man-weeks of time each month, is accident investigation and reconstruction. The ST served here in two ways:

- 1) Calculation of the formulas used on a spreadsheet, so that the officers merely had to type in the measurements taken at the scene, and get instant answers. Very useful in "what if it happened this way" reconstruction decisions. It also made mathematical methods of accident analysis so easy more officers had time to do them, making cases that might have fallen through the cracks without this facility.

- 2) Drawing sketches of accident

scenes. It frequently takes two men a couple of days to hand-draw scale diagrams of a complex accident scene. In one fatal accident case we were able to produce extremely professional looking drawings in two hours.

I was working on implementing the use of CAD programs and plotters in preparing court case diagrams when I was transferred to the "hi-tech" unit in the Fraud division of the detective bureau. Long a hi-tech junky, now I am hi-tech. In this unit the Mega ST really shines. Using its emulation capabilities it reads Macintosh disks, IBM disks (now just 3.5's but soon, with a new external drive, 5.25's too), and native Atari disks. This is invaluable as my small unit acts as consultant to other units and police agencies that need help with computer expertise. This frequently consists of reading data from confiscated disks/systems and printing it out for use in court. The laser printer has made desktop publishing of forms another use. A proposed new form for personnel evaluation was done on the Atari, as well as an activity sheet for the traffic unit, and various bits and pieces in the way of memos and announcements. The most recent implementations are the planned production of search warrants on Microsoft Write, and sending of identification pictures using a scanner and modem to send and computer/printer to receive. The glossary function of MSW is used to bring in the "boilerplate" legal phrases allowing the officer/affiants to just "fill in the spaces" with the pertinent facts. The ability to produce really professional output with all the facts right and all the i's dotted was quickly appreciated by everyone in the bureau. We're working on a pilot program to allow rapid transmittal of ID pictures from the DMV to its offices and local police departments through the digitization route. It appears that FAST text/word processors (like TEMPUS) have great potential for several units (many small police departments, too) in maintaining really free form databases. Our depart-

ment is currently keeping a local stolen property database in a word processor file and using the search function for retrieval. (Sadly it's on an IBM, but this is a perfect application for a multimeg Atari.) We're also about to make the complete Departmental manual available to officers on floppy disks. This monster looseleaf beast is two and a half inches thick but takes up around two megs of disk space. Easily fit into a Mega 4, it gives you search access, using TEMPUS, to any keyword sequence in a second or two, if the file is kept loaded and hot. It's not being done now, but it could be invaluable use to supervisors, administrators, or just anyone who wants to look up something. Come on all you businesspeople, this is a use of those word processors I haven't heard anyone mention, but I'm sure we're not the only ones who could put it to use.

(Continued from Page 4)

this program from the desktop as a .TTP program, or from the \AUTO\ folder as a .PRG program, which configures itself by reading a brief .INF file you write beforehand using the ASCII setting of your word processor or text editor.

One or more of these RAM disk programs should meet your needs. I strongly urge you to read the text files accompanying each program and to test the application with the RAM disk before you trust valued data to it.

Two other programs to put in your \AUTO\ folder with a RAM disk are COPYFIX.PRG from ICD, which fixes GEMDOS's bug of restamping copied files with the present time and date, and one of the several autoloading programs, such as RAMLOAD and ULTIMATE COPY.

ATARI'S SMALL MIRACLES

by Joseph Russek

STAR

A series of colored lines emanating from the center of a black screen combine to make quite an impressive star. Thanks to the Eugene, Oregon, Atari Computer Enthusiasts for this small gem.

```
0 REM EUGENE ATARI COMPUTER ENTH-
1 REM USIASTS EXCHANGE LIBRARY
2 REM **** A STAR IS BORN ****
3 REM BY JON LOVELESS
4 REM C/O MATT LOVELESS
5 REM 18623 PLUMOSA ST.
6 REM FOUNTAIN VLY., CA 92708
7 POKE 77,0
10 GRAPHICS 7+16
20 FOR A=1 TO 48:COLOR A
40 SETCOLOR 4,INT(16*RND(1)),1
50 FOR X=0 TO 157:Y=INT(96*RND(1))
70 PLOT 79,49:DRAWTO X,Y:NEXT X
80 DRAWTO X,Y
100 NEXT A
```

ROLL

Slowly one-by-one four blue cylinders are formed. When they are completed, they begin to rotate, creating a cartoon-like three-dimensionality.

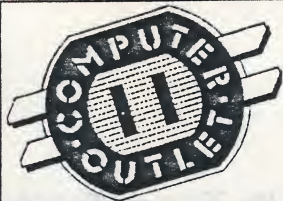
```
5 DEG
10 GRAPHICS 10
15 FOR I=0 TO 7:POKE 705+I,128+2:NEXT I
17 POKE 705,136
20 FOR ANG=180 TO 360+180 STEP 6
30 X=8+8*COS(ANG)
40 Y=16+8*SIN(ANG)
50 COLOR (ANG-180)/45+1:PLOT X,Y
60 DRAWTO X,50+Y
70 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y
90 NEXT ANG
120 FOR ANG=180 TO 360+180 STEP 6
130 X=26+8*COS(ANG)
140 Y=16+8*SIN(ANG)
150 COLOR 9-(ANG-180)/45:PLOT X,Y
160 DRAWTO X,50+Y
170 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y
190 NEXT ANG
```

```
220 FOR ANG=180 TO 360+180 STEP 6
230 X=44+8*COS(ANG)
240 Y=16+8*SIN(ANG)
250 COLOR (ANG-180)/45+1:PLOT X,Y
260 DRAWTO X,50+Y
270 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y
290 NEXT ANG
320 FOR ANG=180 TO 360+180 STEP 6
330 X=62+8*COS(ANG)
340 Y=16+8*SIN(ANG)
350 COLOR 9-(ANG-180)/45:PLOT X,Y
360 DRAWTO X,50+Y
370 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y
390 NEXT ANG
410 GO TO 500
420 FOR ANG=180 TO 360+180 STEP 6
430 X=50+8*COS(ANG)
440 Y=16+8*SIN(ANG)
450 COLOR (ANG-180)/45+1:PLOT X,Y
460 DRAWTO X,50+Y
470 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y
490 NEXT ANG
500 A=PEEK(705)
510 FOR I=705 TO 711
520 POKE I,PEEK(I+1)
530 NEXT I
540 POKE 712,A
550 GO TO 500
```

RAINBOW GTIA

This GTIA demo begins with the formation of a rectangular-colored spectrum. When each bar is completed, shifting of colors takes place, and a rainbow effect is achieved.

```
100 REM GTIA TEST
115 GRAPHICS 10:FOR Z=704 TO 712:READ R:
POKE Z,R:NEXT Z
116 DATA 0,26,42,58,74,90,106,122,138,154
130 FOR X=1 TO 8:COLOR X:POKE 765,X
140 PLOT X*4+5,0:DRAWTO X*4+5,159:PLOT X
*4+1,159:POSITION X*4+1,0:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:"
150 NEXT X
230 FOR X=8 TO 15:COLOR 16-X:POKE 765,16-X
240 PLOT X*4+5,0:DRAWTO X*4+5,159:PLOT X
*4+1,159:POSITION X*4+1,0:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:"
250 NEXT X
300 COLOR 0:PLOT 65,159:DRAWTO 0,159
400 FOR X=1 TO 8:Z=PEEK(704+X):Z=Z+16:IF
Z>255 THEN Z=26
420 POKE 704+X,Z:NEXT X:FOR Y=1 TO 5:NEX
T Y:GOTO 400
```

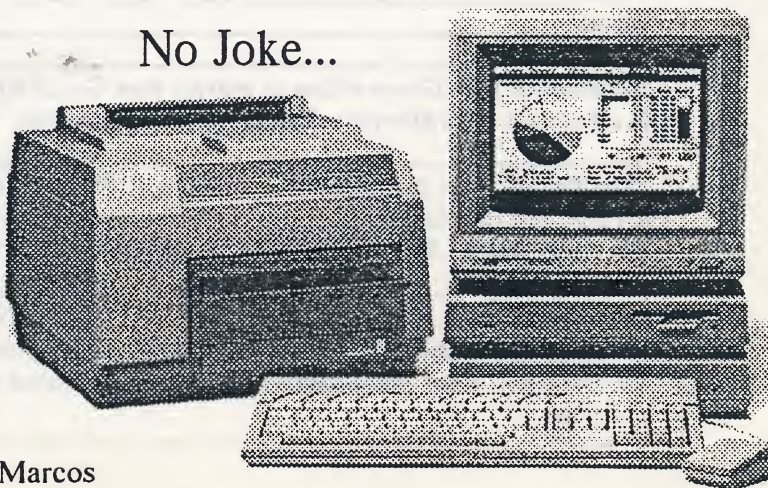
NEW PROMO from ATARI!
MEGA 2 Monochrome system \$1299.99!!

Four megabytes of RAM, high resolution monitor, high speed laser printer and optional Macintosh and IBM compatibility all for below \$3000.

You must be kidding?

Call or stop by any **Computer Outlet** location and we'll show you the lowest priced professional Desktop Publishing system you can find. Add optional emulators and you'll be running programs like **Excel**, or **Lotus 123** on the same computer. You can literally save thousands of dollars over an equally equipped Macintosh or IBM system. If your looking for professional desktop publishing, look no further.

No Joke...



San Diego
282-6200

Chula Vista
585-8100

San Marcos
740-0111

The Retiree Employment Club, 215 3rd Street, Chula Vista, (619) 425-4492, needs advice on using Timeworks Publisher ST to publish a newsletter. Open Every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Ask for Glen Cooper

CURRENT NOTES SUBSCRIPTION FORM -- REGISTERED CLUB MEMBERS ONLY

Club Name _____

President's Signature _____

As a member of a CN Registered Club, please enter my subscription to CURRENT NOTES for a period of 1 year (\$17) _____ 2 years (\$32) _____. Please start my subscription with the _____ issue.

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____

AREA CODE: () PHONE: _____

Mail check to CURRENT NOTES, 122 N. Johnson Rd, Sterling, VA 22170

The Following Beats a Fish Tie as a Thoughtful Christmas or Channukah Gift in the Editor's Opinion

Special User Group Purchase Agreement WordPerfect Corporation is offering WordPerfect 4.1 for the Atari to user group members at a special reduced price of \$155.00. This special offer will only be available from July 15th through December 31st. Please complete the information requested below and return form to: WordPerfect Atari Orders, 288 W. Center, Orem, UT 84057

Name _____
Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone Number(_____) _____ Name of User Group _____
Signature of User Group officer or provide User Group ID# _____
Authorized WordPerfect Dealer (Name, Address, City, State, Zip): _____

WordPerfect Atari 4.1 \$155.00 ___ Shipping: F/X Overnight (\$18.12) _____ F/X 2nd Day (\$ 6.50) _____

UPS ground (no charge) _____ Utah residents add 6.25% sales tax _____ TOTAL: _____

Payment: VISA MC AM EXPRESS CHECK

Cardholder Name _____ Card No. _____

Expiration Date _____ Check No. _____

This certificate must accompany any request. Offer good only in the United States and for customers residing in the United States. Void where taxed, restricted, or prohibited by law. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery unless otherwise specified.

SAN DIEGO ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS
P.O. BOX 203076
SAN DIEGO, CA 92120



EXP: JUL 89

SAN DIEGO, CA 92126

The **January** Meeting will take place on Monday, **January 19th** at the North Park Rec Center Social Room at 6:30 p.m. The January **Workshop** will take place on Thursday, **January 5th**, at the North Park Adult Center (Across from Folsom's Racquetball Court) at 6:30 p.m.